



**Sheila Dixon**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Million Dollar Grant Award Launches Partnership with Museum Community to Teach American History in Authentic Baltimore**

Baltimore, MD (June 27, 2007) – The Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS) is the recipient a three-year grant totaling **\$995,283.00** awarded by the US Department of Education. The grant will fund the Teaching American History in Authentic Baltimore program.

The Teaching American History in Authentic Baltimore program is the result of a partnership between the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, Towson University and the Baltimore City Heritage Area, and the BCPSS. The program is designed to develop exemplary American history lesson plans and professional development sessions that will become part of the school system's infrastructure. Ultimately the partnership will increase student achievement on American History assessments and other tests that measure American History knowledge and understandings, such as the Maryland School Assessment for Reading and the Maryland High School Assessment for American Government. Baltimore's program will target teaching and learning in grades 4, 5, 8, and 9, as well as Advanced Placement American History courses.

"We are grateful to the US Department of Education for recognizing the need for such a program and its relevance to our school community," said Dr. Charlene C. Boston, interim CEO. What is great about the partnership between the BCPSS and Baltimore's museum community is that it will not only help our teachers to deliver American History instruction that connects curriculum materials with Baltimore history but it will make learning interesting for our children. I anticipate a lasting partnership with the Baltimore City Heritage Area and the 50 museums and historical sites with whom the district will be working over the next few years."

Over the next 3 years, a cohort of 90 teachers will be trained to become content experts and skilled professional developers in traditional American History and will learn how to use museums and historic sites to improve their teaching of American history. Teaching American History in Authentic Baltimore will create a professional development program structured around an annual summer institute in which 3 separate cohorts of 30 teachers will improve their content knowledge and their ability to execute and demonstrate active and research based

American history instructional activities. The training will include a series of 24 day-long history workshops at 50 city museums and historic sites.

“This is a big win for our children and teachers, who will learn about Baltimore’s national heritage stories and their relevance today and tomorrow,” said Mayor Sheila Dixon. “It’s a win for our history museums, and will help support and sustain these jewels for residents as well as visitors who are vitally important to our tourism economy. And this is a win for all of Baltimore as we ensure our children become the best-informed citizens of tomorrow.”

The BCPSS is one of 40 school districts nationwide awarded \$116 million dollars in grants by the US Department of Education. The Teaching American History discretionary grant program supports three-year projects to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of traditional American history through intensive, on-going professional development. Grantees must work in partnership with one or more organizations that have extensive knowledge of American history, including libraries, museums, nonprofit history or humanities organizations and higher education institutions.

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